Boomerang
BEAD LOOM

USER'S MANUAL

Thank you for buying a Basic Boomerang Bead Loom

We're sure you're going to love working with this professional quality loom.

It's quite easy to set up and use.
You'll be started on your beading project in no time at all!

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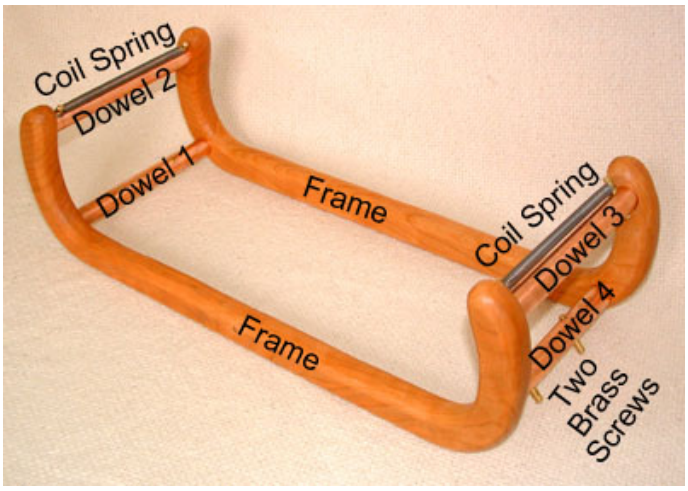
Parts List



This diagram shows all the parts of the Boomerang Bead Loom. Each item is described in detail below.

Frame
The frame consists of two curved wood pieces. The length of these wood pieces is what determines the length of the bead loom's working area.

Dowels 1 – 4
There are four copper dowels that connect the two wood pieces of the frame. The length of these dowels is what determines the width of the bead loom's working area.

Coil Springs
The coil springs connect to dowels 2 and 3. These are used to provide the proper spacing for beads by positioning the warp threads in the spaced between the rings of the coil springs.

The coil springs have loops at each end. These loops are slipped over the brass pegs on the upper dowels (dowels 2 and 3), as shown in the picture above.

Every Boomerang Bead Loom comes with three sets of coil springs, sized for:

1. Czech 11/o seed beads
2. Czech 8/o seed beads
3. Delica™ 11/o and 8/o seed beads (for 8/0 beads, use every other space)

Brass Screws
Warp threads are tied to or wound around the brass screws on the bottom of dowel 1.

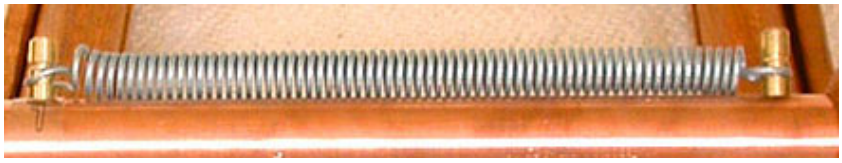
Getting Started

The picture below shows a Basic Boomerang Bead Loom in the position most people choose to use it. You might want to position it in a different way of course, but this photo gives us a common starting point.

Attaching The Coil Springs

Your Boomerang Bead Loom comes with three sets of coil springs, labeled for use with Czech size 11/o seed beads, Czech size 8/o seed beads, or Delica™ size 11/o or 8/o seed beads. For 8/o Delica™ seed beads, place the warp thread through *every other* space in the coil spring, rather than through every space.

Coil spring mounted on Dowel 3



Coil spring mounted on Dowel 2

Choose the set of coil springs that match the size of the beads you will use for your project. Now you're going to stretch one coil spring across each of the two upper dowels (dowels 2 and 3) of the bead loom.

The coil springs have a loop of wire at each end. Slip one loop over the brass peg at one end of dowel 2 then gently pull the spring so you can slip the loop at the other end of the spring over the brass peg at the other end of the dowel 2. Now use the second coil spring of the set and do the stretch it across dowel 3. Make sure you catch the loops in the grooves on the pegs.

The warp fibers go in the spaces between the rings of the coil springs. Using the coil spring that matches your bead size ensures the warp fibers will be the correct distance apart for even placement of the beads in your weaving.

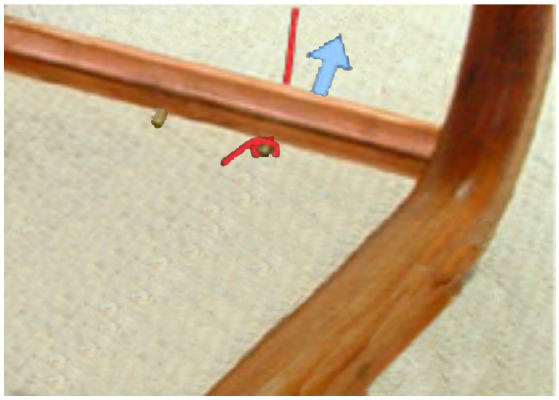
Warping the Loom

Please keep in mind it is much harder to *describe* how to warp the Boomerang Bead Loom than it is to actually *do* it! With that said, let's go…

Place the loom on a flat surface. You should be able to read the 'Boomerang' logo on dowel 4.

You're going to tie the warp thread on one of the brass screws dowel 1. To determine which side you should start on, consider which way you'll prefer to work. If you are right-handed you will likely find it easier to start on the left-most screw; if you are left-handed you will probably want to start on the right-most screw.

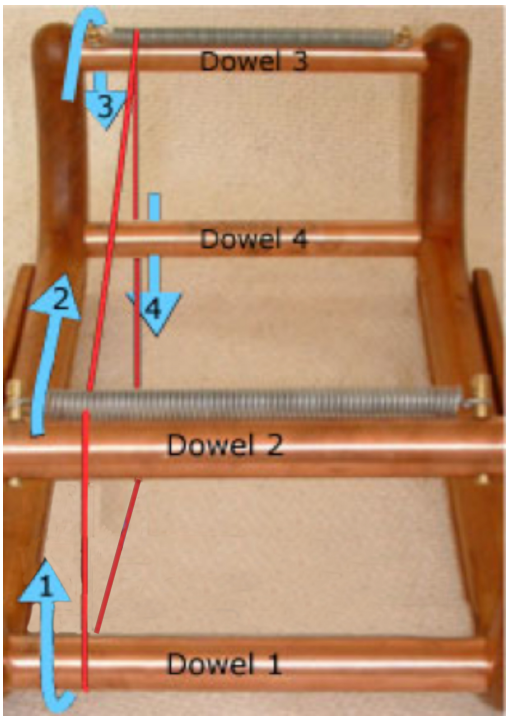
Knot the end of the warp thread around the brass screw you've selected as your starting spot. You will loop more than one warp thread on each brass screw. Depending on your project width, you will work your way across the dowel, connecting warp threads to the brass screws and threading them through adjacent spaces in the coil spring.



To start warping the loom, tie one end of the warp thread on a brass screw on dowel 1.

Maintaining even tension, pull the warp thread over the top of dowel 2, positioning it in one of the spaces in the coil spring. Continue to pull the warp thread across the bead loom work area and position it in the space of the coil spring spanning dowel 3 that lies

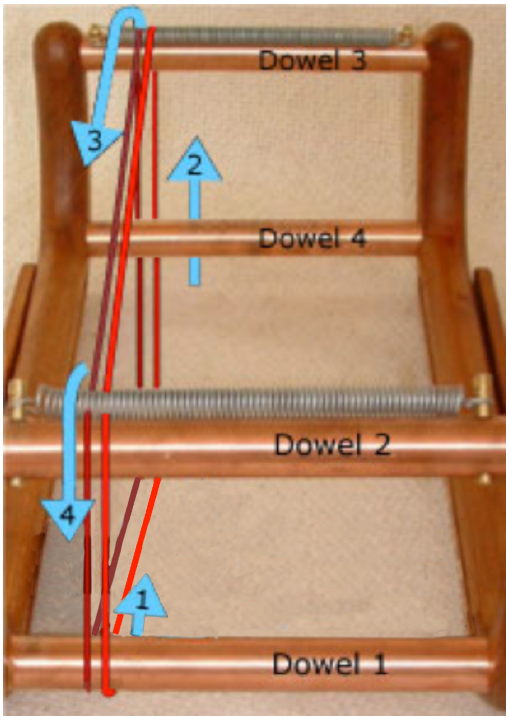
directly opposite the one you used in the coil spring on dowel 2. Pull the thread down and under dowel 4 and across. Wrap it around a screw on the bottom of dowel 1.



This diagram shows the path of your first warp thread

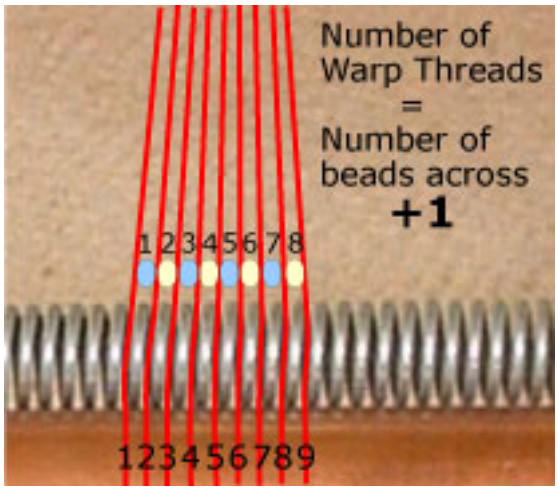
Now you're going to do the same thing in the opposite direction.

Reverse course, pulling the warp thread back under dowel 4 and over dowel 3. Position the warp thread so it goes through the next open space in the coil spring, pull it across the bead loom work area to dowel 2, positioning it to go through the space in the coil spring that is directly across from the one just used in the coil spring on dowel 3 and next to the one you used in the first step. Continue guiding the warp thread down to dowel 1 and wind the warp thread around one of the brass screws on the underside of dowel 1.



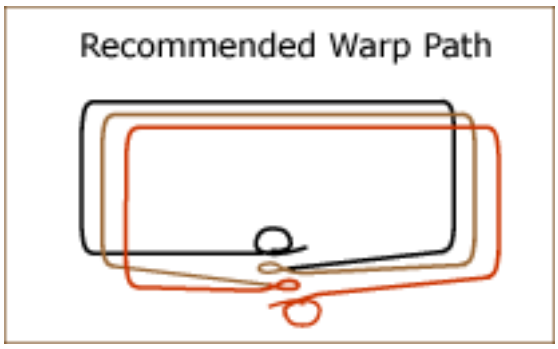
This diagram shows the path of your second warp thread

Continue in this manner, moving over one space in the coil spring each time you reverse direction and moving to the next brass screw on dowel 1 when it is closer to the warp thread's position. You'll want to stop when you have enough warp threads for the chosen width of your finished piece. Because you want to have a warp thread on the outside of both sides of your piece, you want to use **one more** warp thread than the number of beads that will go across the width of your project. For example, if your design is 18 beads across, you will have 19 warp threads.



You need 1 more warp thread than the number of beads across the widest part of your design. For example, if you want rows of 8 beads across, you need 9 warp threads.

Knot the last warp length to the brass screw on dowel 1 nearest to its position. Now you're ready to start weaving!



This diagram shows an example of what your warp thread path should look like. Loops on the outside threads represent knots on the brass screws. Loops in the center indicate the thread looped around the brass screws without knotting.

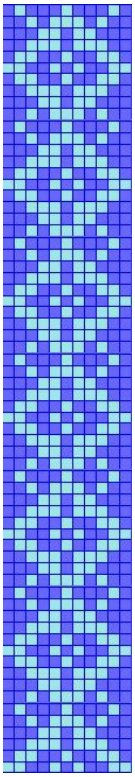
Alternate Warping Method

Warp in one direction

You could also wrap your warp thread around the brass screws on the warp slide, and loop around in the same direction, rather than reversing course for each length of the warp thread.

This method works but it is easier to maintain even tension on the warp thread when you wrap it around the brass screws on the warp slide as described in the section of this manual on Warping the Loom.

Reading a Bead Loom Pattern



Bead loom patterns are readily available. You'll find loads of them on Etsy and other sites. Once you buy one you love, you'll find they're very easy to read. The vertical lines of the pattern represent the warp threads, and there's one horizontal row for each row of beads. So the pattern is a graphical representation of the project you're going to make.

The picture on the right is an example of a 2-color pattern – it's done with dark and light blue beads. When weaving, you work from the bottom of the pattern up. So, looking at the very bottom row of this pattern (below), and

working from left to right you can see it starts with two light blue beads, then two dark blue beads, one light blue, one dark blue, one light blue, two dark blue and ends with two light blue beads. That gives you a total of eleven beads across.

Take a few minutes and see if you can read the second row of bead colors. Here are the bottom two rows of the pattern:

You should have gotten the following: one dark, two light, two dark, one light, two dark, two light and one dark. See how easy it is?

Now that you know how to read the pattern, converting it to a beading project is easy – each row of the pattern is a row of beads. You just need to have the right color beads and string them according to the patterns and you're on your way!

Oh, and it's easy to make your own patterns using graph paper!

Weaving with Beads

To weave with beads you're going to start by preparing your work area. In addition to your bead loom, pattern, beads and thread, you'll want the following items: small paper plates to hold your beads (one plate per color), scissors, beading needles and a pen.

The bead loom: Set up the bead loom on your work surface. Warp the loom, then position the legs so the loom is at a comfortable working angle.

The pattern: Place your pattern where you can refer to it without having to pick it up every time. To avoid errors, use the pen to tick off each line once you've completed it.

The beads: Using a separate plate for each color, pour out a portion of the beads you're going to use for your project. *(Hint: don't pour out too many, it's easier to add more than to pick up beads that you've accidentally spilled.)*

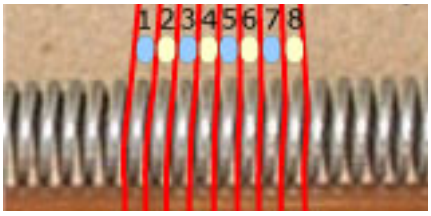
The weft thread: Cut a length of thread to use as your weft thread. Keep in mind you will be using two lengths of weft thread for each row of weaving, so you'll want a nice long thread to start with. *(Hint: keeping it untangled is the key!)*

How to weave with beads: Tie one end of the weft thread onto the first row of the warp threads. This will be the left-most warp thread if you're going to work left to right, and the right-most warp thread if you're going to work right to left. You want this knot to be positioned towards the bottom of the bead loom (the part closest to your body), so slide it down if necessary to get it into position. For purposes of these instructions we're going to assume you are working left to right.

Thread the opposite end of the weft thread onto a beading needle. Working with your bead pattern, pick up the appropriate color beads in the appropriate order. Using the two-color pattern example from the "Reading a Bead Loom Pattern" section of this manual, you would pick up in this order:

2 light blue beads - 2 dark blue beads - 1 light blue bead - 1 dark blue bead - 1 light blue bead - 2 dark blue beads - 2 light blue beads

The best approach for the first row of beads is to start from the side of the piece *opposite* from the side with the tied weft thread. In the figure to the right, if you tied the weft thread to the far left warp thread (to the left of bead 1), you would pick up all the beads for the row, then start with bead 8.



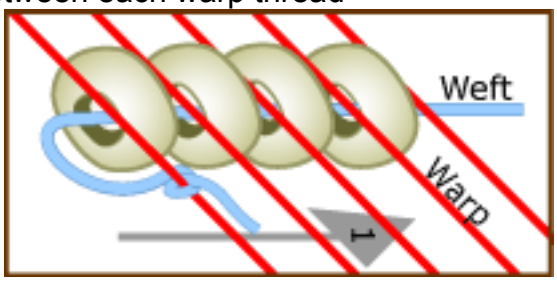
Make sure you have your weft thread with all the beads *behind* the warp thread. Now, starting with the last bead in the row, push the bead up between the last two warp threads so it pokes up above the warp threads. Thread your beading needle back through the bead, making sure that the weft thread goes *above* the warp thread this time. (Hint: it's having weft threads both behind and on top of the warp thread that holds

the bead in place.) Do the same for the next bead to the left and so on. You might want to do two or three beads at a time, but for the first row it's challenging to try to do the entire row at one time.

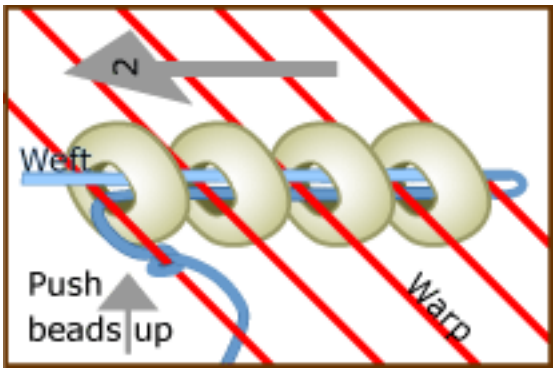
Once you have the first row completed, you want to repeat the process for the second row. Pull your weft thread taut. Keeping it *behind* the warp thread, pick up the next row of beads. Since the first row of beads is holding the warp threads *exactly* bead distance apart (instead of having the coil spring holding the warp threads *approximately* bead distance apart), adding this next row will be much easier. Assuming your project isn't too wide, you should be able to hold the entire row of beads up and thread your bead needle through the entire row at one time. Don't forget, you want to make sure your weft thread goes over the warp thread.

So the beading process is this:

- With the weft thread behind warp thread, pick up beads
- Position one bead between each warp thread



- Push beads up so they're poking up above the warp thread
- Keeping the weft thread in front of the warp thread, thread the weft thread through the beads



Once you get the hang of it, you'll find weaving with beads on your Boomerang Bead Loom is fast and fun. It's exciting to watch the pattern come to life row by row.

When your weft thread gets too short, you can add a new one. First weave the end of the weft thread into your piece by threading it through a single bead at a time, working your way down one warp thread. Move to the next warp thread by weaving through two beads and reverse direction. If you can make a figure eight using this method, that's the best to "lock in" your work. Once you have the weft thread worked into the piece, start a

new weft thread the same way. Weave it through one bead at a time, making a figure eight. Work your way to the edge of the piece and start the next row.

Once you've completed the last row, weave the remainder of the weft thread back into the work using the method described above.

Finishing Your Work

Once you've completed your project there are a couple ways you can finish your work.

Invisible edge
For an invisible edge you'll want to weave each of the warp threads into the piece using the methodology described for adding a new weft thread. Starting from the middle of your piece, cut one of the warp threads. Thread the end onto a beading needle and weave it through your piece, going back and forth a single bead at a time, working your way down a warp thread. Move to the next warp thread by weaving through two beads and reverse direction. If you can make a figure eight using this method, that's the best to "lock in" your work. Continue working this way, from the middle to the edges of your work.

For mounting
You can also weave the weft thread in and out around the warp threads, essentially creating a fabric edge to your piece. This can be folded under if the beading is to be mounted on fabric or some other backing. It can also be used to hold the piece into a frame or mat.

You can find lots more tips and tricks for using bead looms, finishing your pieces, along with great ideas for bead loom projects on the internet.

Glossary

We may have used some terms that you are not familiar with. They are explained here. If we've forgotten something or if you have a question not addressed here, please email us at boomerangbeadlooms@earthlink.net and let us know what to add!

Warp

Warp threads are the vertical strings on the loom. They are attached to the Boomerang Bead Loom by tying them to the brass screws on bottom dowel. The warp is strung parallel to the boomerang-shaped sides, over the top and bottom dowels and the coil springs attached to them. The coil springs at the top and bottom of the bead loom serve to separate the warp fibers at the proper spacing for the size of beads you plan to weave with. The warp threads stay in place throughout the weaving process, during which beads are placed between the warp threads and are strung on and held in place by the weft (see below).

Warping the Loom

No need to worry about the bead loom itself warping – our bead looms are made of furniture-grade cherry wood which will not warp. Rather, “warping the loom” refers to attaching and stringing the warp threads on the bead loom.

Weft

The weft threads are the horizontal strings used to hold the beads in place. While the warp threads are set up and remain on the loom, the weft threads are the ones that you weave through the beads. Here’s a handy hint: while warp threads go up and down, weft threads go “from weft to wight." Using a beading needle, beads are strung on the weft and pushed up from underneath so that one bead fits between each of the warp fibers (see figure 4 below). That weft thread is underneath the warp thread. The weft is then threaded back through the beads from the opposite direction on top of the warp threads (see figure 5 below). Having weft threads on both sides of the warp thread is what locks the beads in place.

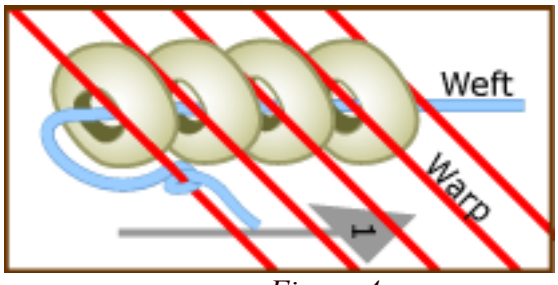


Figure 4

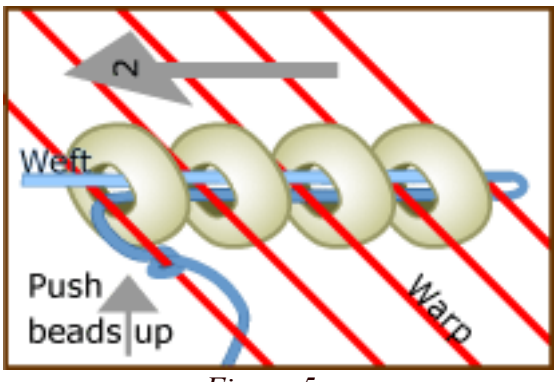


Figure 5

Frequently Asked Questions

What string should I use?
Nylon upholstery thread or braided fishing line works well for both the warp and weft threads when weaving on our bead looms. Six or eight pound string works well for most projects.

What holds the beads in place?
Passing the weft thread both below and above (or behind and in front of) the warp thread is what keeps the beads in place. This fabric of fiber and beads gives loom-woven pieces their unique drape and suppleness. While pictorial patterns and complex designs can be woven with needle and thread alone, most people find it faster to use a loom and mistakes in the pattern are less likely to happen when using a bead loom.

What's the difference between a bead loom and a fabric loom?
It's the weaving method that is different. With a bead loom the weft is woven first behind the warp thread and then in front of the warp thread. With a traditional fiber loom the warp threads are separated so the weft can be woven above and below the warp threads in a single pass.

What do the coil springs do?
Your Boomerang Bead Loom comes with three sets of coil springs for weaving with Czech 11/o and 8/o seed beads, and for Delica™ 11/o and 8/o beads. The spaces between the coils in the spring are where the warp fibers rest, making the coil springs equivalent to a reed on a traditional fiber loom. Likewise, the spaces between the loops in the coil springs correspond to the dents in a reed.

The space between each of the loops in the spring coil is the same size as the corresponding beads for which is it labeled. This space determines how far apart the warp threads are spaced, allowing for even placement of the beads in your weaving.

If the warp threads are too close together, the beads will bunch up and the surface of your weaving will look wavy, not flat. If the warp threads are too far apart there will be empty space between the beads and the warp and weft threads will be noticeably visible.